

Memoir vs. Autobiography

What's the difference?

Autobiography

- **focuses on the chronology of the writer's entire life**
- **timeline**

Memoir

- **covers one specific aspect of the writer's life**
- **"slice of life" or "snapshot"**

Writing Warmup!

Throughout his book, Gantos refers to the saving power of books and reading. Gantos used books to comfort himself in times of trouble, to distract him from his problems. However, he also refers to reading as something like a drug.

- What are your thoughts on Gantos' approach to books and reading?
- Can you give examples from your own life that mirror this conflicted view?
- Are there other elements in your life that are similar? For instance, what about the positive and negative effects of the Internet? iPhone? Music? TV?

Chapter 1 Questions

- What is the setting (time AND place)?
- Describe Gantos' physical appearance.
- Describe his mentality.
- What job did he hold in prison?
- How did his views on society change between childhood and adulthood?
- What do we learn about his father?
- How did Gantos decide to better his life? What decision did he make?
- Where did Gantos keep a secret journal?

Hole in My Life

- Jack Gantos ultimately made the choice to smuggle drugs. Take a look back at the chapters preceding this decision and create a list of the decisions Gantos made that culminated in his trip.
 - Example: In chapter 2, Gantos talks about living on his own as a teen and wandering through casinos and drinking.
- Respond to the following question: How did these early actions lead up to the one that changed the course of his life?